



Department of Justice

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NORTH PORT REGISTERED SEX OFFENDER PLEADS GUILTY TO DISTRIBUTION OF CHILD PORNOGRAPHY

Tampa, Florida - United States Attorney A. Brian Albritton announces that Timothy Geenen (age 31, of North Port) pleaded guilty today before U.S. Magistrate Judge Elizabeth A. Jenkins to distribution of child pornography. Geenen faces a minimum mandatory sentence of 15 years in federal prison.

According to the plea agreement, on October 20, 2005, Geenen sent eight email messages that contained child pornography to someone in Minnesota. A criminal history check on Geenen revealed that he had been arrested on September 25, 2002, by the Laramie, Wyoming County Sheriff's Office for manufacturing child pornography and had been convicted on six counts of manufacturing. The Wyoming State courts had sentenced Geenen to a minimum of two years and up to six years of incarceration. Geenen was released from prison on parole in July 2005 and registered as a sex offender in Florida shortly thereafter. Less than three months after his release, Geenen distributed child pornography via email and possessed numerous images of child pornography. ~~This case~~ was investigated by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE). It is being prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Stacie B. Harris.

This case was brought as part of Project Safe Childhood, a nationwide initiative launched in May 2006 by the Department of Justice to combat the growing epidemic of child sexual exploitation and abuse. Led by United States Attorneys' Offices and the Criminal Division's Child Exploitation and Obscenity Section (CEOS), Project Safe Childhood marshals federal, state, and local resources to better locate, apprehend, and prosecute individuals who exploit children via the Internet, as well as to identify and rescue victims. For more information about Project Safe Childhood, please visit www.projectsafechildhood.gov.

The investigation that led to this case was part of Operation Predator, a nationwide ICE initiative to identify, investigate and arrest those who prey on children, including human traffickers, international sex tourists, Internet pornographers, and foreign-national predators whose crimes make them deportable. Launched in July 2003, ICE agents have arrested more than 12,800 individuals through Operation Predator. ICE encourages the public to report suspected child predators and any suspicious activity through its toll-free hotline at 1-866-347-2423. This hotline is staffed around the clock by investigators. Suspected child sexual exploitation or missing children may be reported to the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children, an Operation Predator partner, at 1-800-843-5678 or <http://www.cybertipline.com>.